

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 073555

FOLLOWING REPEAT CAPE TOWN 556 SENT ACTION SECSTATE USUN
INFO BONN LONDON OTTAWA PARIS PRETORIA MARCH 20.

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 556

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, SF, WA

SUBJ: NAMIBIA: CONVERSATION WITH BRAND FOURIE

REF: (A) CAPE TOWN 543, (B) USUN 937

1. I HAVE A PRIVATE CHAT WITH BRAND FOURIE SATURDAY NIGHT
AFTER DINNER AT THE RESIDENCE IN WHICH HE EXPLAINED THAT
THERE WAS NO REPT NO POSSIBILITY OF THE SAG ACCEPTING
THE NAMIBIA PROPOSALS AS NOW DRAFTED. HE SAID ENTIRE
CABINET WAS AGAINST THE PROVISION CALLING FOR WITHDRAWAL
OF PLATOON-SIZE UNITS FROM THE FORWARD BASES. IN ADDITION,
DEFENSE MIN P.W. BOTHA AND MILITARY LEADERS REMAINED TO BE
CONVINCED ABOUT THE WITHDRAWAL DATE AND THE CIVILIANIZATION
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OF THE HANDLING OF THE SERVICE FUNCTION. HE CALLED ATTENTION
TO THE FACT THAT P.W. BOTHA ONLY RECENTLY HAD BEEN BROUGHT
AROUND TO ACCEPTING THE IDEA OF THE FUTURE OF WALVIS BAY
BEING DISCUSSED BY THE SAG AND THE NEW NAMIBIAN
GOVT AFTER INDEPENDENCE.

2. I ASKED FOURIE WHERE THE CABINET ATTITUDE AS HE DESCRIBED

IT LEFT US. HE SAID IT HAD BEEN HIS HOPE THAT BY BRINGING TO THE ATTENTION OF THE FIVE THE MPLA'S WILLINGNESS TO ALLOW SMALL SADF DETACHMENTS IN FORWARD POSITIONS AS PART OF A GENERAL WITHDRAWAL FROM THE BORDER (CAPE TOWN 469), THE FIVE MIGHT ACCEPT A SIMILAR ARRANGEMENT. THIS HAS NOT BEEN THE CASE. MITIGATING IN FAVOR OF THE ANTICIPATED SAG ATTITUDE, HE OBSERVED, IS THE BELIEF THAT SWAPO WILL PROBABLY NOT FIND THE PROPOSALS ACCEPTABLE EITHER, SO WE WOULD END UP WITH A SITUATION COMPARABLE TO THE RHODESIAN IMPASSE. I ASKED WHETHER BY THIS HE MEANT THE SAG WAS READY TO MOVE FORWARD WITH AN INTERNAL SOLUTION. HE DID NOT ANSWER THE QUESTION DIRECTLY. INSTEAD HE TALKED ABOUT THE NEED TO SET A "TARTET" DATE FOR ELECTIONS SOON IN ORDER TO AVOID A WHITE ELECTION BEING PRESSED BY DU PLESSIS.

3. I EXPRESSED REGRET THAT AFTER THE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE OVER THE PAST YEAR, THE SAG WOULD TAKE AN ADAMANT POSITION ON ISSUES LIKE SADF PLATOONS AT FORWARD BASES AND PUTTING IN CIVILIANS TO HANDLE THE SERVICE FUNCTIONS. I ASKED HIM WHETHER A COMBINATION OF LOCAL POLICE UNITS AND UN PERSONNEL MIGHT NOT TAKE CARE OF SECURITY REQUIREMENTS IN THIS AREA. HE REPLIED THAT ONLY SADF UNITS AT THE FORWARD BASES AND SERVICEMENT HANDLING THE SUPPLY FUNCTIONS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. HE MADE QUITE CLEAR THAT P.W. BOTHA AND THE PRIME MINISTER, AMONG OTHERS, TOOK A FIRM STAND ON THESE ISSUES.
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4. COMMENT: I PASS THE FOREGOING ON AS FOURIE'S PERSONAL STATEMENT OF THE STATE OF PLAY WITHIN THE SAG. I CANNOT SAY WITH CERTAINTY THAT THIS WILL BE THE SAG POSITION ONCE OUR PROPOSALS ARE ON THE TABLE. CHANCES ARE THEY WILL SAY VERY LITTLE AND WAIT TO SEE HOW SWAPO REACTS BEFORE TIPPING THEIR HAND. FOURIE SAID NOTHING FURTHER ABOUT PIK BOTHA COMMENTING OFFICIALLY ON OUR MARCH 5 PRESENTATION.
BOWDLER UNQUOTE VANCE

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